

STORY 32.

A SENSITIVE CONSCIENCE.

A Muslim's conscience is very sensitive and his moral sense is very keen.

Once (Hazrat) Abu Baker and (Hazrat) Omar were engaged in debating a point when quite unwittingly a harsh word dropped from the lips of (Hazrat) Abu Baker. Remorse at once seized him and he entreated (Hazrat) Omar to forgive him. But (Hazrat) Omar refused to forgive. This was too much for (Hazrat) Abu Baker. He was at a loss what to do and how to please (Hazrat) Omar. At last he made his way to the Prophet, and related the cause of his distress. When the Prophet heard the story he assured him three times that God would forgive him.

In the meantime (Hazrat) Omar on his part had felt compunction for his obduracy, and in search of (Hazrat) Abu Baker had called at his house. Not finding him there he too came to the house of the Prophet. When the Prophet saw (Hazrat) Omar his face began to betray signs of displeasure. But when (Hazrat) Abu Baker saw this he at once sat in a respectful posture and said: "O Prophet of God it was I who was the aggressor. It was I who offended first. Please do not be displeased with (Hazrat) Omar."

STORY 33.

HOW (HAZRAT) OMAR THE GREATEST EMPEROR OF HIS TIME LIVED IN VOLUNTARY POVERTY.

UNDER the influence of the Prophet's example the Muslim did not regard the pursuit of wealth as worth their while, and those of them who worked to get money did this with the object of relieving the needs of the poor. The generality of Muslims preferred poverty to wealth and with their money helped the poor.

(Hazrat) Omar as Caliph devoted his whole time to the affairs of the state, therefore he could not earn anything with his own hands with which he could support himself and his family. So he was given a small allowance from the state treasury and whatever he received as his share of the spoils of war he gave away to the poor.

Once he had to stay indoors for an unusually long time. At last when he came out he found people waiting for him.

It was afterwards found that he had no clothes to wear. The clothes he wore needed washing. He had washed them and put them out for drying. When they were dry he put them on and came out. This was the man who could spend millions if he had so desired. But poverty was his pride. It did not detract from his greatness, but rather enhanced it.